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A WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON ROTC

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16 October 1973

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The future of ROTC is threatened because academia is apathetic or merely tolerant of the program, and students show little interest in ROTC since the draft has been discontinued. A need for commissioned officers from ROTC programs for both Active and Reserve forces will continue for the foreseeable future. Literature, to include recent comments just published, discussions with members of academia, Army Officers assigned to ROTC Instructor Groups, and ROTC cadets are the major sources of data. A historical trace reveals educators to be indifferent or hostile because of curriculum content which they consider undeserving of university credit, and exclusion from a participatory role in the planning and implementation of ROTC programs. The questions of federal funding and the dispersion of ROTC universities or colleges require answers. Hence a White House Conference on ROTC should be held. National attention would then be focused on this very important source of Army officers. Moreover, it would provide the University Presidents, Professors of Military Science, ROTC Cadets, and Department of Defense officials in attendance the opportunity to resolve differences while developing sound programs which would assure the continued production of commissioned officers.

## WARTIME INTEREST

For several years now the subject of Army ROTC has been of intense interest to large numbers of Americans. Members of the Federal Government were interested because of the need for ROTC graduates to fill commissioned officer requirements, particularly in Vietnam. Individuals attending college and of draft age were interested because of the option afforded for commissioned officer status upon deferred entry into military service. Educators were interested because of on-campus violence directed at ROTC programs and facilities of the university, and they questioned the educational worth of subjects taught in ROTC. Parents were interested because their children were faced with the decision of entering ROTC and because of classroom and college program disruption attributable to the ROTC.

The cessation of hostilities in Vietnam and the end of US involvement in that war has caused additional interest to be focused on ROTC to include questioning its very future. Students, no longer propelled into ROTC by the draft, are demonstrating an apathetic attitude toward ROTC. Educators are not satisfied with program content and, not unexpectedly, ignore or merely tolerate ROTC despite contractual agreements between government and institutions of learning. The military itself has not spelled out post-Vietnam needs, thus causing some to believe that ROTC may no longer be necessary. These conditions are alarming and deserve a response which conveys a positive and enlightened approach, a response that embodies the

thoughts and recommendations of educators who have a vested interest in ROTC as well as Department of Defense representatives who must maintain a properly trained and manned military force.

#### ASSURING A FUTURE

Accordingly, a White House Conference comprised of University Presidents, Professors of Military Science, ROTC cadets, and members of the Department of Defense should be held to determine the future of Army ROTC. Invitations to the conference should reflect such university or college considerations as academic reputation, geographical location, student population, and past attitudes toward ROTC. Absence of an ROTC program, for whatever reason, should not serve as a bar to attendance. Participation and contribution should be the prime consideration for attendance, and certainly University Presidents or others within academia are well equipped for that role. Professors of Military Science and Senior ROTC cadets could contribute empirically and thereby contain discussions within the parameters of practicality. Their numbers and Universities of assignment should be representative of the total educational system - large schools and small schools; conservative schools and liberal schools; schools from the northeast, southeast, midwest, southwest, and northwest. Department of Defense representation should, of course, include the Secretary and those responsible for manpower and education. The incumbent White House Advisor on Domestic Affairs and the Chief of White House Staff are especially well qualified because of recent assignments to contribute to the conference.

## THE CHANGING NEEDS

The likelihood of change in attitude or position by college students, educators, and Department of Defense is remote unless significant attention is focused on ROTC and genuine, meaningful change takes place. Just how should we treat the question of ROTC now that the war is over in Vietnam, our Armed Forces are shrinking, and foreign policies and commitments are being reviewed? Already we see evidence of contradiction, adjustment, and the implied need for direction. A Boston newspaper recently announced in a rather lengthy article that "BU begins talks with military on bringing back ROTC." The report concluded with these statistics: "Army ROTC ... is offered on 290 campuses, compared with 268 campuses in 1969. For all services, there are 538 ROTC programs. However, in 1968 there were 218,000 students enrolled in ROTC; last year there were about 75,000."<sup>1</sup> Only a few days before, the Army Times stated that Secretary of the Army Howard H. Callaway announced that "The Army was forced to reject about 10,000 requests from ROTC graduates for active duty this year because of the declining size of the force. The same situation will prevail next year ... ."<sup>2</sup> These two recent instances of emerging conflict or change may appear paradoxical at first glance, but they are neither unusual nor unexpected. But change must be characterized not only by orderliness and logic, it must also have the genuine support of those responsible for the program. Moreover, without the total dedication and support of academe, it will falter.



Considering the essentiality of ROTC to the Army, particularly in times of national emergency, its future should be carefully considered in light of national objectives, and plans developed which will assure attainment of these goals. The educators, the military and the federal government must come to grips with the issues. To allow erosion of the program which has contributed so much to our nation in times of war and peace would be a terrible disservice to the future of the United States. A review of the more salient events and moods that shaped the growth and development of ROTC will assist in understanding the current program and provide insight which will suggest future courses of action.

#### THE ORIGIN OF ROTC

American military history is marked by the citizen army, citizen-soldier approach to the solution of manpower needs. The origin of ROTC however is traceable to the Civil War, which revealed a lack of trained military leadership, particularly in the north. As a consequence, the Land-Grant Act of 1862 included provisions for military instruction in the curricula of the universities and colleges founded under this bill. This means of developing officers also satisfied the fear of having a large standing army which received officers only from the United States Military Academy, for the Act granted to each state tracts of land or scrip from which funds would be derived for the support of at least one college which would offer, among other studies, military tactics.

Varied interpretations of the imprecise provisions of the Act and little support from the War Department for the program allowed each school to determine the program content and implementation procedures. This resulted in a wide array of concepts regarding the length of the program. Instruction consisted almost entirely of military drill. Since the Act did not provide for federal support of the program, it was necessary for the schools to assume responsibility for the instruction using retired Regular Army or Civil War volunteer officers. This was changed by Acts of 1866, 1888, and 1891, in which Congress authorized the War Department to use Regular Army officers as military instructors in military schools such as Norwich. In 1870, Congress authorized the issuance of small arms and artillery by the War Department to these schools. In 1889, the War Department proposed that Professors of Military Science and Tactics be granted full faculty status, that the program be compulsory, and that students wear a uniform while attending classes in military instruction. By 1898, forty-two institutions had organized military departments.

Throughout this developmental period, universities and colleges began to show interest and concern in providing a public service. Following the Spanish American War, military preparedness and federally controlled reserve forces became War Department objectives. Moreover, training in the land-grant schools began to receive recognition. Especially significant was a War Department requested conference of college officials at the Army War College in 1912 for the purpose of establishing minimum training standards. More importantly, it brought

the educator and the military together to work for common objectives. Evolving from several actions designed to strengthen the nation's preparedness was the National Defense Act of 1916 in which the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program was officially born.

#### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

While too late to significantly contribute to World War I, Army ROTC grew and by June, 1919, was operational in 191 universities and colleges, approximately twice the number that existed when war was declared.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, antagonism was developing between educators and military men regarding the acceptance of credit for ROTC courses. Drill and citizenship best describe these courses. The former was considered to be of a lower level than appropriate for college instruction, while the latter appeared presumptuous in that it implied that the military knew the obligations of citizenship, and its presentation denied students the opportunity to develop a philosophy through inquiry and examination. Another point of contention in the twenties was the compulsory two years of military training in a land-grant school. Although not inherent in the Morrill Act, this War Department interpretation caused strong resentment by both students and educators. In fact, ROTC was put on an elective basis at the University of Wisconsin by the state legislature in 1923 because of the strong feeling against compulsory military training. The University of Minnesota decided in 1933 to follow suit. The War Department position in each instance was to let the state legislature and the universities deal with the question.

The issue of compulsory military training at schools and colleges had thus emerged on the national scene. Liberal educators and pacifists believed this to be incompatible with the US ideal of peace. Also an issue was the militarizing of American youth in the ROTC without the approval of the American people. Although an effort to abolish compulsory military training through the introduction of a bill to the House Committee on Military Affairs was unsuccessful, the campaign to eliminate the compulsory aspects of ROTC resulted in seventeen colleges dropping ROTC and seven removing the compulsory condition between the early twenties and the mid-thirties.<sup>4</sup> While the military continued to insist that the ROTC program was essential to the reserve forces and that the reserves were vital to national objectives, the War Department support did not demonstrate such a belief. Waning and inadequate support prompted the Land-Grant Association to accuse the War Department of indifference towards the ROTC program. As a consequence, the question of credit for ROTC courses was again raised. While the ROTC programs were notably weak in some areas, frequently criticized by educators, treated with indifference by the active Army, and often lacking clear direction, it provided thousands of qualified officers during World War II. According to General George C. Marshall, "Without these officers the successful rapid expansion of our Army would have been impossible."<sup>5</sup>

#### THE IMPACT OF WAR

After the war, efforts were undertaken to re-establish the ROTC program which had been sharply curtailed. Wartime demands for

officers had been best satisfied by Officer Candidate Schools which could produce officers trained in those skills needed by a lieutenant on active duty. This system also took advantage of the more outstanding enlisted men who demonstrated high qualities of leadership within the ranks and could reasonably be expected, with additional training, to be effective in a very short period of time in a commissioned status. While the stated purpose of ROTC had been to provide Reserve Officers, governmental policies, agreements and commitments caused the program, by 1950, to be one of providing officers to the active Army. This change in purpose was conceived and implemented with practically no participation by the universities and colleges where the programs were being established. Moreover, expansion of the ROTC program contributed to loss of the Land-Grant identity.

Korean War requirements for officers were easily met once the ROTC programs were enlarged. Following this war, enrollment in individual ROTC programs and throughout the nation declined. Unless a minimum of 100 students were enrolled and 25 were commissioned at each host institution, the program was placed on probation. This quantitative approach ignored the value of graduates from institutions of high academic standards, while denying individuals an active Army or reserve career at a time when efforts to gain and retain personnel were underway.

The war in Vietnam reminds many of the campus dissent targeting against the ROTC programs, people and facilities. But this recollection fails to acknowledge the thousands who received a

commission through ROTC and served quite capably in myriad assignments. Activation and utilization of Officer Candidate Schools became necessary because of the length of the war and the short periods of individual commitments. Dissent did, of course, impact unfavorably on ROTC and its future. According to DA, DCSPER, twelve schools have elected to terminate the ROTC program since the height of campus unrest and hostility to war and the ROTC in 1969. Four of these claimed reasons other than disfavor with the military, but all twelve sought disestablishment within two years of the period of greatest on-campus turbulence in the spring of 1969. These schools and dates of disestablishment are:

Harvard University (Mass)	30 Jun 70
Dartmouth College (NH)	30 Jun 70
Boston University (Mass)	30 Jun 70
Allen Military Academy (Texas)	31 Aug 70
Yale University (Conn)	30 Jun 71
New York University (NY)	30 Jun 71
Pratt Institute (NY)	30 Jun 71
Boston College (Mass)	30 Jun 71
City College of New York (NY)	30 Jun 72
Gordon Military Academy (GA)	30 Jun 73
Stanford University (Calif)	30 Jun 73
Oklahoma Military Academy (Okla)	30 Jun 73 <sup>6</sup>

#### ROTC TODAY

The Armed Forces today are faced with several questionable areas

that impinge on the future of the ROTC. Fundamental to these considerations are the nation's foreign policy, the Army budget, the size and composition of the active Army, and the size and composition of the Army Reserves. Writing in the Commanders' Digest, Lieutenant General Robert C. Taber of Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Office of the Secretary of Defense, stated that one of the many important actions taken in preparation for the end of the draft was the raising of ROTC subsistence payments and the increasing of scholarships.<sup>7</sup> Clearly the productivity of ROTC is of interest to the Department of Defense. An editorial in a recent issue of The Reserve Officer stated that:

The Chief of Staff of the Army, General Creighton Abrams, was reported as having warned strongly that the Reserves' viable structure was indispensable to national security and that any individuals on his staff that did not work to that end would be leaving.<sup>8</sup>

Clearly active Army leadership views the reserves as essential to force requirements.

Interestingly, new ROTC units are being established. On 24 January 1972, nine additional ROTC units were approved by the Secretary of the Army. These schools, which are listed below, began enrolling cadets in September 1972.

Bishop College (Texas)

Carson-Newman College (Tenn)

Columbus College (GA)

Fort Valley State College (GA)

Indiana Institute of Technology (Ind)

Northwestern State College (Okla)

Pennsylvania State University, Delaware County Campus (PA)



St. Augustine's College (NC)

Southern State College (Okla)<sup>9</sup>

A geographical shift is quickly discernible. Irrespective of ultimate assignment - Regular Army, Reserves or National Guard - the absence of ROTC graduates from the northeast and a corresponding increase from the south strikes at the roots of the long recognized citizen-soldier concept in the American military. Moreover, the very make-up and mood of the armed forces may become regionally oriented or at least fail to have within its ranks graduates from the academically highly ranked Eastern schools. Either of these conditions is harmful to armed forces which are desperately in need of greater national acceptance and national support. Edward Bernard Glick believes:

ROTC will remain in this country for some time, whatever its form and whatever its name. Do we then, want to recruit all of our college-trained officers from only certain sections of the country, with only certain kinds of political and social views, and from only certain universities that, unjustly or not, do not have the reputation, prestige, and intellectual excellence of the institutions that have removed or will remove ROTC from their hallowed halls and lawns? Even if it were physically and economically possible for us to get all of our officers from the service academies, would we really want to do so? I think not.<sup>10</sup>

Statistically, the numbers of senior division units are on the increase as revealed by these DA data:

FY 68	256	FY 71	279
FY 69	268	FY 72	285
FY 70	283	FY 73	294

While the number of institutions offering ROTC has increased,



enrollment has decreased. To be sure, requirements have also decreased, but the ratio between production and active Army requirements has dropped substantially. The annual Reserve Component need of 4,600 to 5,800 officers from ROTC is an additional production requirement. Statistical data for the current and past four years are as follows:

<u>FY</u>	<u>ENROLLMENT</u>	<u>ROTC PRODUCTION</u>	<u>ACTIVE ARMY ROTC REQUIREMENTS</u>	<u>ADT</u>
70	109,705	15,560	8,712	6,848
71	73,963	15,150	5,445	9,705
72	50,234	12,300	5,734	6,566
73	41,294	8,935	3,920	5,015
74	45,000	6,590	4,000	2,590 <sup>11</sup>

ROTC from 1965 to 1970 continued to be the primary source of new officers for both the Regular Army and the Army Reserve. Cutbacks in active Army officer requirements for fiscal year 1971 indicated that a growing number of ROTC graduates would not be required to perform a two-year active duty stint, but would be released to the Army National Guard or the Army Reserve after three to six months of active duty for training. Recent reductions in the number enrolled in the ROTC program reflect the changeover of the ROTC basic course from required to elective status in many participating institutions, reduced draft pressure, prospect for all-volunteer Army, and anti-military activities on the college campuses.<sup>12</sup>

While this statement serves to summarize changes in the ROTC which reflect the Vietnam war plus the social and political considerations which impacted on the ROTC, it underscores the reserve forces need from ROTC. Realizing that officers for both the active Army and the Reserves must be drawn from ROTC, what provisions are being made to

assure adequacy of quantity and quality?

Women are now enrolling provided the school approves the concept. They may receive 4-year ROTC scholarships and, like the male cadet, they accept a four-year duty obligation. This action supplements WAC direct commissioning authority and production through OCS which leaves unchanged the opportunity for upward mobility from within the ranks. Minority students are being afforded increased opportunities to compete for ROTC scholarships, and ROTC detachments at predominantly black schools are, and will continue to become, more numerous. Legislation is being sponsored to reimburse ROTC host institutions for ROTC operating costs. Another action is proposed legislation to increase the number of scholarships. Flight instruction spaces (700) for FY 73 is greater than the number of completions (638) in FY 72. Airborne training and ranger training opportunities remain almost unlimited. Army Orientation Training which provides for at least one cadet from each senior ROTC unit to join an active Army unit for training has been increased.

These actions can be expected to have a most salutary affect on the ROTC program. But are these Army actions enough to assure goal attainment? Have the institutions where the programs are to be implemented been consulted and, if not, shouldn't they be? The history of ROTC has been vastly influenced by educators with results usually unfavorable to the Army. With the voluntary aspects of ROTC ranging from participation in the program to existence on campus, past successful campus actions to eliminate or curtail activities, and the need for graduates in the active Army as well as reserve

forces, it is time to consider gaining the confidence and support of academe. Lieutenant General Harris Hollis, Chief of Reserve Affairs at Department of the Army believes, "Public support, including academia, is an imperative if the Reserve system is to flourish."<sup>13</sup> Agreed, but why don't we already have support from academia, and what must be done to gain and maintain the support considered imperative?

### THE ISSUES

There are existing conduits for educators to influence the program and the curriculum. They are however very impersonal except for the few educators who are members of ROTC advisory panels. Representation of total view of academia is not assured by limited panel membership. Submission of views in written form denies the give and take of open conference. Furthermore, the written proposal may be treated at a staff level where the prepared response will be cordial but unreflective of genuine interest or substantive content. As noted in the historical tracing, educators have conferred with the Army but the circumstances prompting these conferences were such that, when coupled with their infrequency, it becomes evident that the Army has avoided this approach. While the reasoning may be quite logical, the question of greater participation by educators in discussions affecting ROTC remains largely untreated.

A White House Conference would have the effect of focusing national attention on the military and the ROTC at a time when both need support. The agenda should include the Army philosophy of ROTC training and the educators philosophy of educating students who may

become commissioned officers. Training versus education is still discussed with outcome varying regionally. Credit for ROTC conducted at the University of Massachusetts is granted for classroom courses which have been subjected to a critical faculty review and taught in conjunction with the faculty. At Appalachian State University in North Carolina, credit may be awarded by the Professor of Military Science for skills such as supply room management learned and practiced outside the classroom. Clearly there is a divergence which should be eliminated or reduced. Professor Irving B. Holley, Duke University and a member of an ROTC advisory panel, stated on 15 August 1973 that Military Departments should educate in values within the classroom and on campus, thus leaving the training in skills for accomplishment off campus.

Another issue is that of funding. Universities and colleges are experiencing economic problems and would welcome additional funding support. The DA sponsored legislation to provide full reimbursement for ROTC operating costs was sent to Congress in May 1972 but has not been acted upon. Knowledge that this proposal was forwarded is of little comfort over one year later when operating costs are still soaring. An opportunity to present in open session the school's view would appeal to hard pressed university officials. Certainly the federal government must acknowledge use of the facilities and service of educational institutions for federal purpose without adequate reimbursement.

Yet another question is that of future requirements which leads to the size program necessary to qualify for retention. Will there

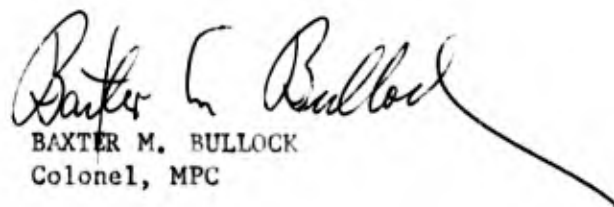
be a substantial reduction in the number of graduates required? Will a minimum number of cadets per year group be established in order to retain an ROTC unit at any university or college? Also, will geographical region and population density be considerations, thus assuring continuation of the soldier-citizen Army concept or will enrollment statistics be the only determination? These and other issues could be discussed and plans developed for their resolution in a setting which would be of immense value to the Army.

#### THE RESOLUTION

A White House Conference on ROTC with educators and military in attendance is a logical consequence of events occurring in the recent past, particularly when reviewed in the light of history. It is understandable that many educators still consider the primary objective of ROTC to be that of providing instruction in drill, for the historical development of the program is marked by limited consultation or coordination between academia and the Department of the Army. As stated in Education and Military Leadership, "Responsibility for achieving a proper relationship of higher education to the needs of society rests with individuals and agencies of the federal government and with leaders in higher education."<sup>14</sup> For whatever reason, there has been little recent evidence of federal government seeking the support of educators in the planning and implementation of programs at a time when the very future of ROTC is threatened.

No matter how realistically men of intellect and liberal views accept the need for strong armed forces, they continue to find it difficult to reconcile the authority and discipline of the military profession with the spirit of open inquiry that is essential to a free educational system. Yet it is this very reconciliation that is a key to the survival of democracy today.<sup>15</sup>

Although written in 1959 this view has application today. The federal government in all its vastness has the capability and indeed the responsibility to bring together academia and the military for the stated objectives of assuring an ROTC that will provide properly educated commissioned officers sufficient to meet contingencies faced by our great nation in the coming years.

  
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#### FOOTNOTES

1. Richard M. Weintraub, "BU begins talks with military on bringing back ROTC[sic]," Boston Sunday Globe, 9 September 1973, p. 33.
2. "Callaway On TV," Army Times, 5 September 1973, p. 6.
3. Gene M. Lyons and John W. Masland, Education and Military Leadership: A Study of the ROTC, p. 43.
4. Ibid., p. 47.
5. Ibid., p. 52.
6. Colonel Louisell and Lieutenant Colonel McDonald, ROTC Program, p. 1.
7. Lieutenant General Robert C. Taber, "What's Ahead for the All-Volunteer Force," Commanders Digest, 30 August 1973, p. 3.
8. "Congressional Vacation and Cuts in Vogue," The Officer, September 1973, p. 5.
9. Louisell and McDonald, p. 2.
10. Edward Bernard Glick, Soldiers, Scholars and Society, p. 95.
11. Louisell and McDonald, p. 2.
12. Walter G. Hermes, "Global Pressures and the Flexible Response," in American Military History, ed. by Maurice Matloff, p. 614.
13. "Reserve Chiefs Make Case On A Hot Saturday," The Officer, September 1973, p. 7.
14. Lyons and Masland, p. 237.
15. Lyons and Masland, p. 63.

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10. Weintraub, Richard M., "BU begins talks with military on bringing back ROTC [sic]." Boston Sunday Globe, 9 September 1973, p. 33.